

**REMARKS**

By this amendment, claims 1-36 and 47-54 are pending.

The dependency of claims 51-54 have been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 5-10, 12-16, 19-24, 29,30 and 35 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,380,018 (Andoh et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the rejection, the Examiner identified a first body 19 having the main channel 18 and secondary channel 17, one inlet and outlet, the main channel connected to the inlet. The Examiner also stated the main channel and the secondary channels are provided as grooves in the first outer surface of the first body ini rejecting claim 7.

Andoh discloses a capillary tube 18 connected to a feeding port 21, in communication with an ink sub 20 having orifice 17. Orifice 17 is an outlet, not a secondary channel having an outlet. Even assuming that the orifice 17 is considered a secondary channel, there is only a single orifice 17, not a plurality of secondary channels, as is claimed. Also, the main channel 18 is a capillary tube connected to the first body, not part of the first body. The Examiner further defines the ink sump 20 as a transfer means made of first recesses. The ink sump is a narrow gap containing the ink layer 16. The thin plate 13 separates the ink layer 16 from the transmission medium 14 within the pressure cell 11. This film does not cover a first recess nor prevent a fluidic connection between the secondary channels as asserted by the Examiner.

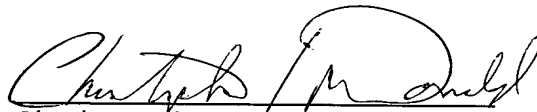
Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form. The rejection of claim 2 should likewise be withdrawn in that the valve 45 disclosed by Andoh et al. is not a decoupling means. The valve 45 is a check valve, as disclosed in column 12, lines

28-31, preventing flow only in one direction. The decoupling means of the invention allows flow in both directions or stops flow in both directions when actuated.

The claims are allowable over the prior art. A favorable action is eagerly and earnestly solicited. If any issues remain, and the Examiner believes a telephone conversation would resolve such issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney.

If pending fees are due and owing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account 08-2455.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher J. McDonald  
Reg. 41,4533

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HOFFMAN, WASSON & GITLER, PC  
2461 South Clark Street  
Crystal Center 2, Suite 522  
Arlington, VA 22202

(703) 415-0100

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